

How the Bear Lost his Tail.*

Once on a time on a certain day a mousedeer was in a hole, busy eating terong rimbang. He noticed a tiger approaching the ant heap where he was eating the terong. He thought that the tiger wanted to catch him. His joints and bones all trembled owing to his very great fear and his head was in a whirl. While in this state he began to chew one of the terong making as much noise with his mouth as he could. "Kerab kerab kertub kertub" went his jaws. "Ambohi," he said, "how delicious is this pickled tiger's eye." Then he eat another terong in the same way and said the same thing. And so on four or five times. When his majesty stripes heard that he began to shudder and crept away very softly.

A short while after the tiger met with a bear and said to him, "Ho, Sang Beruang, hath my lord heard what manner of animal it is that lives in that ant heap there, and is so busy eating tiger's eyes?" The bear replied, "Thy servant knoweth not." The tiger then said, "Come along and see." But the bear replied, "I dare not." The tiger said, "Never mind, come and let us swear fealty to each other, and let us tie our tails together. Then if anything happens we will both suffer." So they tied their tails together, and approached the mousedeer's ant heap very gingerly as if they were going against some very great enemy.

When Salam di Rimba saw these animals he knew that they were badly frightened, so he shouted out, "Look at this accursed tiger, his father owed us a white bear and he is now going to pay his debt to us with a black one. Black or not, bring it along quickly." When the bear heard this he was very greatly startled "Hei," he said, "is this the trick that Sang Harimau is trying to play on me? He wants me to pay his father's debt, does he." So the bear tugged violently.

* A short tale by Penghulu Haji Mohamed Nasir, bin Kanda Mat Sen, of Hutan Melintang. Lower Perak. He is a Perak Malay. He cannot recollect the source from which he learnt it.

And the tiger too was startled when the bear began to wrench like that. So he began to jump and the bear commenced to heave. Finally the bear's tail broke off short and both ran away. And that, they say, is why the bear's tail is always short. Such is the story of how the mouse deer's cleverness saved him from being eaten by the tiger.

Sa'ekor Pelandok Dengan Sa'ekor Harimau dan Beruang.

Sakali përsëtua kapada suatu hari adalah sa'ekor pëlandok dudok didalam suatu lobang busut tëngah makan buah tërong rimbang, tërdëngar akan sa'ekor harimau bërjalan mënghampir busut tëmpat ia dudok makan buah terong itu. Pada sangkanya hëndak mënuangkap ia. Gëmëntarlah sëndi tulangnya dëngan katakutan yang amat sangat, sërba salah pada fikirnya. Didalam hal itu dimamahnya sabiji buah tërong itu mëmbësarkan bunyi mulutnya bërkërab-kërab, kërtub-kërtub, sërta katanya, "Amboi, sëdapnya pëkasam biji mata harimau ini." Këmudian dimakan pula sabiji lagi bërkata juga ia sëpërti itu, sampai ampat lima kali. Pidëngar oleh maharaja belang, yaani harimau katakata itu, timbullah nëgëri sëdikit hatinya, berundorlah ia përlahan-lahan.

Hata tiada bërapa lama ia bërjalan itu, bërjumpa ia dëngan sa'ekor bëruang, lalu harimau itu bërkata, "Hei, Sang Bëruang. Adakah tuan hamba mëndëngar apa binatang didalam lobang busut disitu tëngah mëmakan biji mata harimau?" Dijawab oleh bëruang, "Tiada hamba katahui." Kata harimau, "Chuba mari kita lihat?" Jawab oleh bëruang, "Hamba tiada bërani." Kata harimau, "Tiada mëngapa, mari kita bërjanji tëgoh sëtia dan bërtambat ekor. Jikalau susah apa-apa pun bërsama-samalah kita kadua." Lalu bërtambat ekorlah kaduanya serta mënghampiri busut tëmpat pëlandok itu, dëngan bëringatan bërsikap diri sa'oleh-oleh, sëpërti mëngadap sëtru yang bësar. Maka dilihat oleh Salam di Rimba, yaani pëlandok, kalakuan itu, dikatahuinyalah, hal binatang kadua itu didalam katakutan. Lalu ia bërtampek katanya, "Ini-lah machamnya, choba juga

lihat harimau haram ini ! Bapanya dahulu bėrhutang bėruang puteh pada kita, ia pula hėndak bayar pada kita bėruang itam. Itam-itam lah bawa mari lėkas chėpat-chėpat.”

Dami didėngar bėruang kata itu, ia pun terpėranjat yang amat sangat. “Hei,” katanya, “bagitu akal Sang Harimau, menipu aku rupanya ia hėndak mėmbayar akan aku hutang bapanya.” Maka mėronta-rontalah ia. Dan harimau itu tėrkėjut, dirintak oleh bėrnang itu, lalu harimau itu harimau itu mėlompat, dan bėruang mėrintak, lalu putus ekor bėruang itu, lari kadua, dėngan sėbab itu, inilah konon bėruang tiada bėrekor panjang. Dėmikianlah chėtėranya kapandian pėlandok bėrlėpas dirinya dėripada dimakan harimau.